

**RICHMOND ARTS AND CULTURE COMMISSION (RACC)**  
**Regular Meeting Minutes**  
**Thursday, June 23, 2022**  
**7:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m. via Zoom**

Present: Commission Chair Florene Wiley; Vice Chair Melissa Kirk; and Commissioners Tom Herriman and Phillip Mehas

Absent: Commissioners Lynson Beaulieu, Emily Leighton; and Council Liaison Melvin Willis

Staff Present: Arts & Culture Manager Winifred Day

**I. WELCOME / CALL TO ORDER / ROLL CALL**

The RACC meeting was called to order by Chair Wiley at 7:02 p.m.

**II. ACTION ITEMS:**

**a. APPROVE June 23, 2022 Meeting Agenda**

Motion by Commissioner Mehas, seconded by Vice Chair Kirk to approve the June 23, 2022 meeting agenda, as submitted, which passed unanimously by a Roll Call vote.

Commissioner Mehas asked that the meeting agenda be modified to include a new item to discuss the Senior Center Mural under Item IV. Discussion Items.

Chair Wiley asked that the meeting agenda be modified to include a new item where staff would provide a brief overview of staff's attendance at the Americans for the Arts Conference in Washington D.C., also to be considered under Item IV. Discussion Items.

Without a motion or second, Chair Wiley called the roll to modify the June 23, 2022 Meeting Agenda, which passed unanimously by a Roll Call vote.

**b. APPROVE May 26, 2022 Meeting Minutes**

Chair Wiley requested a revision to the first sentence of the first paragraph under Item VIII. Announcement: Upcoming Events, a. Grantee Event as shown on Page 6 of the May 26, 2022 minutes, as follows:

*Chair Wiley referred to Mr. Hindler's public comment related to Sordid Lives at Masquers Playhouse and commented that there was a grantee project of What Women Want, also at Masquers on Father's Day/Juneteenth weekend, and tickets had been made available to Commissioners for a 1:00 P.M. matinee on June 18 and an evening performance at 7:00 P.M. on June 19, 2022.*

Arts & Culture Manager Winifred Day added that corrections had also been made by staff to the misspelling of some names in the May 26 meeting minutes.

Motion by Commissioner Mehas, seconded by Commissioner Herriman to approve the minutes of the May 26, 2022 meeting, as amended, which passed unanimously by a Roll Call vote.

### **III. PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Arts & Culture Manager Day read public comments from Cordell Hindler dated June 17, 2022: *Hello Winifred, I have some comments for the record. 1. The Mayor has mentioned the Arts and Culture Commission at the May 24<sup>th</sup> Council meeting. 2. I will speak with the Youth Council at their meeting next week to encourage them to apply for the vacancies. Sincerely, Cordell.*

### **IV. DISCUSSION ITEMS**

#### **a. Senior Center Mural**

Ms. Day reported she had been provided photographs of the revised Senior Center Mural Restoration and expected the series of five murals to be installed within the next 30-days. She added that an encroachment permit had been received this week.

Commissioner Mehas expressed concern with the firm that was handling the restoration project, and Ms. Day stated moving forward certain things had to be part of the contract ahead of time, which may not have been included in the past and which may have slowed the process. Also, the business license was unpaid. Staff was doing its due diligence to ensure the firm followed the requirements. The installation date was unknown at this time but staff would contact the RACC when that information was available.

#### **b. Americans for the Arts Conference in Washington D.C**

Ms. Day reported the three-day Americans for the Arts Conference in Washington D.C. had been very informative. Americans for the Arts had been around for some time, now had new administration and the conference included the participation of around 500 major cities, fewer than in the past partially due to COVID-19. Due to the smaller conference size it allowed room for input from all participants on what was important to each community and included a diverse range from across the country. She highlighted some of the activities provided and discussions on various topics. She reported she had shared some of the City of Richmond's success stories during the conference and she understood there was some information from the conference available online.

Ms. Day added that while in Washington D.C. she had been able to meet with Melissa Granville with the James Irvine Foundation, who had previously requested a location for a mural in Richmond; however, the Foundation ultimately had found a location elsewhere, and had unveiled a mural on the National Lawn. She had been lucky to have viewed that installation along with several museums and other great artwork, some of which included a local artist.

As to whether members of the RACC or the Public Art Advisory Committee (PAAC) could join staff in attending the Americans for the Arts conference in 2023, Ms. Day explained that would require some planning in advance.

Commissioner Mehas was pleased that Ms. Day had been able to attend the conference. He understood it was a wonderful experience and reported he had attended the conference on three occasions, which had been completely paid for by the City when the former Arts Manager had been able to find funds for a member of staff and a few members of the RACC to attend. He suggested it would be a valuable experience for the RACC Chair to attend the conference with Ms. Day/staff given the ideas and new art forms involved. After his attendance, he had also been able to come back with examples of public art he had been able to share with the RACC. He asked that funding for attendance at future conferences be included under the Art Manager's Budget.

Vice Chair Kirk agreed with the benefits of attending the Americans for the Arts conference.

## **V. INFORMATION ITEMS**

### **a. NPA Mini Grant RFP and Application**

Chair Wiley understood the NPA Mini Grant Application had been posted online and the orientation session scheduled for Saturday, June 25, 2022 at 11:00 a.m. She also understood the session would be recorded and for the first time attendance at the orientation session was not mandatory.

Ms. Day reported she and Commissioners Mehas, Beaulieu and Vice Chair Kirk would conduct the hour-long session. She noted that every week and over twice a week, over 100 people had been targeted with the Request for Proposal (RFP), which included those who had requested information, those on the mailing list and past NPA Mini Grant recipients, with postings on Facebook, in the weekly City Manager's Newsletter and a variety of other places. At least ten people, most of whom were new, had responded. She confirmed that the orientation session was not mandatory.

Vice Chair Kirk reported she would continue to make postings for the orientation session on Facebook and on Instagram.

Ms. Day added in response to the Chair that staff had been working on an agenda for the session along with Vice Chair Kirk and Commissioner Beaulieu, and there was a list of the main items of discussion. She also clarified the agenda for the orientation session was not required to be posted publicly since it was an information session only but it could be posted later along with the recording from the session.

Chair Wiley asked that what would be discussed at the beginning of the session be announced so people would know what they were talking about.

Commissioner Mehas suggested staff evaluate how the program had worked over past years given issues that had come up taking staff time to address separate from the information session.

Chair Wiley suggested that could be discussed as part of agenda Item IV. Committee Reports.

Ms. Day explained that a final report was required by applicants with input sought on how the City could do better, which would be helpful for the future.

Commissioner Herriman asked the dates when the winners of the NPA Mini Grants would be announced, and was informed by Ms. Day that the deadline was July 1. On July 14, staff expected a short list would be announced but the process would not be complete until after July 28. After that date, interviews would be conducted with some but not all applicants since it had been decided last year that would involve too many interviews. The month of August would be used to work out any details prior to any announcements. An announcement date for the winners had been included in the tables in the NPA Mini Grant application RFP, identified as September 30, with the winners to be under contract by November 2022.

## **VI. COMMITTEE REPORTS**

### **a. NPA Mini Grant Liaison Report Updates (RACC Commissioners)**

Chair Wiley reported she had attended a workshop production of the musical performance of What Women Want at Masquers Playhouse, with a full production planned in the fall, and that the presentation she had attended had been sold-out. She had been impressed with the Masquers Playhouse and its layout for the production What Women Want and Sordid Lives, and had also been pleased with the spirit of cooperation between Masquers Playhouse and the fledging producer of What Women Want. On another matter, she reminded Commissioners that their final NPA Mini Grant Liaison reports were due and should be comprehensive in nature.

Commissioner Mehas reported he too had attended the production at Masquers Playhouse, which had acknowledged and thanked the RACC.

Chair Wiley confirmed that Masquers Playhouse had mentioned the RACC in its program and when it had opened the show.

Vice Chair Kirk reported her NPA Mini Grant recipient Anthony Edwards, a trail writer, had stopped communicating with her although she had requested updates. She was unsure whether any forward motion had been made.

Ms. Day reported that Mr. Edwards had a contract, had submitted information but had yet to submit an invoice. Staff would wait until the deadline before taking any action.

Ms. Day had also spoken with Doug Harris and clarified that some applicants had not been submitting receipts or had their documents in order but there was another week to pull all documents together. RACC Liaisons were asked to review invoices prior to submittal to staff.

b. PAAC Report (Chair Beaulieu)

Ms. Day highlighted all of the projects the PAAC had been working on each month, which information had been provided to the RACC. She reported the City Council had recently approved a 12-month contract for the Public Art Master Plan, and encroachment permit fees had not been charged for two banner installations but Public Works Department overtime had been paid for the installation from the Public Art Fund. A checklist was required for the Nevin Plaza Public Art Project, for developers to pass on to the Design Review Board or City Council, and Mark Metz was working on the West Contra Costa County Justice Center Project but there had been challenges obtaining short-term insurance and design drawings. Staff engineers had met at the site to discuss the design requirements.

In addition, the didactic signage for Ookwe Park was almost complete with a draft having been presented to the RACC. Staff would meet at the park on June 29 at 11:00 a.m. to verify the placement of the signage. Also, the Caltrans Beautification Project budget had been reduced and a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) would be established between Caltrans and the City of Richmond, with the public art portion a beautification project with landscaping, fencing and other components and with new murals to be installed under the underpass across from artist John Werhle's mural currently at MacDonald and San Pablo Avenues. Whichever artist was selected and whatever theme or design was chosen would have to complement the existing art on the other side. It was likely the artists who had worked on the other John Werhle murals would be chosen. The selection of the artists would be made by the City of Richmond not Caltrans. The City would have 18-months from the start of the contract to finish the contract.

Commissioner Herriman reported on the status of contacting the Presidents of the Neighborhood Councils directly to solicit interest in a public art installation. He had sent emails to all Neighborhood Council Presidents and planned to follow up with a telephone call with each individual who had a phone number listed with the City. Two contacts had been made, with interest from the Hilltop Neighborhood Council for that area he described as a public art desert, which was interested in having something to replace a sign that had once welcomed people to Hilltop Mall.

Commissioner Herriman had also received an email from someone from Point Richmond interested in a public art installation for a site at the park where Cutting Boulevard dead-ended into Point Richmond, and where there were plans to rejuvenate the park via brick walkways/borders using original bricks from the brickyard. Within the next few days, he and Commissioner Leighton would contact everyone they could on the list to generate more interest.

Chair Wiley was encouraged by the progress on what she described as one of the more important projects for some time. She thanked Commissioners Herriman and Leighton for their follow-through.

Ms. Day added that she was working on the legal side of what they were trying to accomplish in terms of actual ownership of the work. She clarified there were applications at this time from the Hilltop and Iron Triangle Neighborhood Councils and possibly another from Point Richmond but she would have to follow-up on the ownership of the property, and clarified the call to artists would have to be very specific. Also, grant funding to balance out other funding would be explored.

Commissioner Mehas suggested public art should be located on public land and expressed concern with public art placed on private property.

Chair Wiley liked the idea of public art in medians.

Ms. Day recognized the need to be creative and not follow one approach.

Commissioner Herriman explained, when asked by Commissioner Mehas, that the original effort to reach out to the Neighborhood Councils had resulted in no replies, which was why he had suggested a nudge with an email or telephone call.

Ms. Day stated the Neighborhood Council would come up with the thematic direction, the City would help manage the selection process, and a representative of the RACC would be on the selection panel to ensure an inclusive process.

Chair Wiley requested that the process be documented step by step which would be instructive for other communities and for the stakeholders involved. She was proud to see this happening in the City of Richmond.

c. NPA Mini Grant Application Committee 2022-23

Chair Wiley commented that the application included language where one could only apply so many times for an NPA Mini Grant. She was uncertain of that threshold and expressed concern there could be some inequity involved. As the RACC grew, she recommended consideration of another level of funding beyond those asking for funding the first and second times.

Ms. Day explained the intent was not to just work with the same people all the time but to potentially partner with people and build upon those partnerships, and depending on the applications received helped with how flexible they could become.

Chair Wiley again did not want to be the kind of Commission that prohibited one from applying a specified number of times in that part of the growth of the program was to invite more people to the table for variety and diversity.

Vice Chair Kirk understood the concerns but also understood the language was intended as a suggestion, but she agreed there was no desire to eliminate anyone. She suggested capacity building and emerging artists with a component for training was very important to the community but recognized more funding was needed.

Commissioner Herriman questioned whether to limit groups to possibly three awards within a certain period of time. He understood if the same groups were competing and there were a lot of repeating artists some budding artists whose applications may not look as good as those who were more experienced would be eliminated, which was not the intent.

Ms. Day suggested the language in the next application could be adjusted to address the concerns raised and Chair Wiley suggested staff be prepared to discuss this topic during the June 25 orientation to ensure a balance among the levels of artists involved.

d. Volunteer Outreach

Ms. Day reported volunteers continued to attend meetings of the RACC and PAAC with Keno still interested in working with the RACC in some way. There was an opportunity for people to apply for future City Commissions and staff would continue to move forward once a new Mayor had been seated in 2023. Staff hoped to establish a relationship with the new Mayor prior to January 2023, with a list of potential applicants to the RACC to emphasize the need to fill vacant positions as quickly as possible.

Vice Chair Kirk stated she also continued to post on Facebook that volunteers were still needed for the RACC but a process was needed to on-board people and identify assignments. She expressed the willingness to post a flyer on social media but would need direction whether or not there was an on-boarding process.

Ms. Day agreed a list of bullet points where the RACC needed help could be part of a flyer but Vice Chair Kirk was uncertain there was sufficient people power to do that work, and Chair Wiley understood the City had a way to collect and assign volunteers and the RACC had to go through that process.

Chair Wiley suggested the Vice Chair was aware of what needed to be done to create bullet points that could be included on a flyer and which were the same as tasks to do, and volunteers could pick from those categories after attending RACC meetings to become familiarized with the work involved.

Vice Chair Kirk understood the process was that a volunteer must first follow the volunteer process identified by the City then Ms. Day could take on those volunteers with a list of what people could do or which projects could be assigned to them.

Ms. Day suggested between now and the July RACC meeting this effort could be framed and put into writing to be discussed at the next meeting.

Vice Chair Kirk stated she would prepare something to forward to the RACC and staff for review.

## **VII. May STAFF REPORT**

Ms. Day provided an update on the Art Academy University Summer Scholarship Program and reported there were ten students from Richmond High Schools who had registered for the six-week program, with more information to be provided at the next RACC meeting.

In response to Commissioner Mehas, Chair Wiley explained that the Art Academy University Summer Scholarship Program was an initiative of the Arts and Culture Manager's Office. The RACC was not involved other than being made aware of staff's pursuit of the program to be made available to students.

Ms. Day added the Art Academy University had a host of people who managed the communication with students and the schools and she served as a facilitator only.

## **VIII. ANNOUNCEMENT: UPCOMING EVENTS**

### **a. Grantee Events**

No report.

### **b. Community Partner Events: Juneteenth, RMSI**

Ms. Day reported that the Richmond Main Street Initiative would unveil its banners on June 25 at 10:00 a.m. but none of the RACC would likely be available to attend given the NPA Mini Grant orientation session scheduled the same date.

### **c. Love Your Block**

Ms. Day reported there were a couple of projects to be approved related to the Parchester Community Center Mural, which was due to be restored due to tagging. No changes would be made to the mural and no action was required by the RACC other than to inform the RACC of the proposed restoration.

Ms. Day also reported on the activities planned throughout the month and the planned pop-ups around the City.

In response to Vice Chair Kirk, Ms. Day clarified that when staff sent out videos of murals being painted the information was intended as information provided to the group. She and staff from the City Manager's Office would be compiling a sample of all reports, pictures and videos she had received as evidence people were doing their projects. KCRT would also be involved in the production and once complete that package could be posted.

Ms. Day thanked Chair Wiley for all her hard work on the RACC and for the City of Richmond since this was her last meeting with the RACC. She wished her well on her future endeavors.

Chair Wiley thanked staff for the nice comments. She believed in the work of the RACC and would continue to recruit for the RACC. She hoped the next Mayor would consider the hiring of a Director of Public Information as a priority given the great things going on in the City of Richmond.

Commissioner Mehas thanked Chair Wiley for her leadership and her efforts on the RACC and stated she would be missed.

**IX. ADJOURN until July 14, 2022**

On motion by Commissioner Mehas, seconded by Commissioner Herriman, and carried unanimously by voice vote to adjourn at 8:55 p.m. to a Regular Meeting of the RACC on July 14, 2022.